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HUMAN RELATIONS IN  
THE NAVY  
AND IN  
INDUSTRY

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## INTRODUCTION

In a study of management and, perforce, human relations, I have been struck with the multitude of identical convictions held by industrial executives, writers, and naval officers, concerning the subject. This paper results from my desire to increase my own knowledge and awareness of, and facility in, a skill that is too often neglected. Perhaps the reading of it may sharpen your reactions, your recollections of similar experiences in your own past, and help you to solve a problem or examine your own conduct and state of mind in the future.

The content is not revolutionary or earth shaking. Men have been dealing with other men, subordinate and superior, for quite awhile. The business world has posed the example for many ways of doing something administratively better in the military service, and in turn has benefitted from experiences proven on the large scale in the services.

The field of this study is limited to administration, since the parallel with industry is being drawn. This does not rule out the existance of differences in the organizations, and of motivating forces therein; the Navy (with which I deal as being representative and most familiar to me, certainly) still must have exacting discipline and immediate obedience to orders. Yet it is through the years of administration of training and discipline, the thousands of repetitions of drills and required responses in "peace time", that we obtain the reactions and attitudes necessary in battle.

The subject is intangible. The "how" cannot be set down in a pat set of rules which any individual can follow and become a successful administrator and handler of men. Perhaps some of the "whys" will serve as prompters and guideposts.





## I. THE NEEDS

"People are funny" are trite words born in antiquity and having various shades of meaning according to their usage and purpose. To quote the more specifically meaningful and pertinent words of one of our current mentors and educators, "people are human beings." A study of human relations in any field or organization involves an appreciation of the fact that individuals will persist in being, not cogs in a machine, but human beings, logical and illogical, intelligent and unintelligent, responsive or in need of motivation, abnormal in our conception and perfectly normal in their own thoughts, rationalizing their own faults and detecting ours, each with self-interest as a driving influence, in whatever position they happen to be, and whether in industry or the Navy.

Noone questions or denies the fact that a need exists in the operation of any organization for an understanding of the human and social elements at work. Herbert Blumer classified that need as a problem of industrial enterprises.<sup>1</sup> If it is a problem in industry, how much more so in the Navy as an organization five times the size of the General Motors Corporation and far more complex.

In "Education for Executives" Chester I. Barnard stresses three needs:

(1) the need of inculcating an appreciation of the importance and of the inevitability of non-logical behavior on the part of human beings; (2) instruction as to the nature of general social systems; and (3) instruction about formal organizations as organic and evolving systems.<sup>2</sup>

These needs will be referred to and amplified later.

Examples of the similarities between the Navy and an industrial corporation are multitudinous. On a large scale, their organizations are similar in the categories of (a) administration, wherein the Navy Department in Washington,

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Dubin, Human Relations in Administration, (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951), introduction by Herbert Blumer, p v.

<sup>2</sup>Chester I. Barnard, Education for Executives, quoted ibid., pp 7-8.





D.C. and the far-flung district and fleet commands compare with the home office and outlying district, area, or foreign offices of business; (b) operation, wherein activities in "the field" and afloat carry out the policies and directives of the Navy Department similar to the activities of the production and sales departments of an industry. Their management is more particularly analogous; The Joint Chiefs of Staff (Board of Directors) preside over the overall objectives and missions, which are put in the form of directives by the Secretary of the Navy (President); The Chief of Naval Operations (General Manager or Executive Vice President) is in a top-management policy and particularly decision-making position, assisted by his Deputies (Vice Presidents) and Chiefs of Technical Bureaus (Department Managers); Commanders and Commanding Officers (Area, District, and Branch Managers) direct the operations of their particular decentralized activities, guided by directives from top management and technical (functional) requirements of the technical bureaus (departments), aided at all echelons by line and staff officers (junior executives) and non-commissioned officers (foremen and supervisors). In fact, industry adopted the terms "line" and "staff" directly from the military, with the exact delineations of meaning and functions. As particular instances of similarity, both industry and the Navy are adopting and expanding the concept and function of the comptroller (controller), and industry is following the Navy into the field of an Office of Coordination of Systems. The Navy, in fact, operates many industrial plants and activities (Naval Research Laboratory, Naval Gun Factory, naval shipyards) comparable in size, in number and type of civilian personnel, and in almost all operations, to large industrial corporations.

In no field do the Navy and industry reach such common ground in their needs and problems as in administration and management. Effective administration involves the direction of the coordinated and cooperative efforts of persons in attaining a common objective. This requires competent executives, with par-



ticular ability in dealing with human beings. And human beings are the members of any organization, be it industrial, political, religious, social, or military. Newman analyzes administration in terms of what an administrator does, i.e., planning, organizing, assembling resources, directing, and controlling. He goes on to say:

Plans are made to guide human activity, and they should be formulated in light of their effects on many people. Organization deals with jobs for people and the established relationships between these jobs. Assembling executive personnel is 100 percent human relations. Direction is concerned with the way one person gives instructions to others. Control is effective only if human behavior conforms to plans. In other words, human relations is not a separate issue, but an ever-present one."<sup>1</sup>

He does not imply that human relationship is the only factor to be considered, or even the most important always; he includes human relations "as an integral part of each administrative process." No more do I say that human relations always is the sole or most important consideration of a military executive; I will deal later with exceptions peculiar to the military organization.

Not too long ago "labor" was the exploited underdog that "capital" used as it wished to build the empires of the nineteenth century--and later. The common laborer was uneducated, underprivileged, and rarely expected more as his lot. The office worker enjoyed only a slightly more livable plane; and both were hired and fired at will as "business" wrung from them the last degree of time and energy. Labor was not specialized or highly trained because industry did not require it, except in the few particular crafts. Workers were easily replaced, and "human relations" was a term in the theorists text books. Of course some workers took definite pride in their "trade", particularly when associated with the large, powerful concerns; and presidents of industry rose from the laboring ranks.

During the same period the Navy was still in the era of "wooden ships

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<sup>1</sup>W. H. Newman, Administrative Action, (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951), pp 4 and 7.





and iron men" -- the men were of iron physically, but the enlisted ranks were in much the same status as industrial workers, poorly paid, uneducated as a whole. Their work did not require highly technical training, they followed an almost unvariable routine under direct orders, and they neither knew of nor cared about the missions and objectives of their commanders and forces. Again, "human relations" was a term unheard of and leadership was exercised by strong example, rigid discipline, and a hard hand. However, as a whole they lived by tradition and an intense loyalty to their ships and shipmates, taking greater pride in their ability as rugged seamen and in the professional ability of their officers than the industrial employee did in any similar manner. And this was true even of the many who joined the Navy from the ranks of the unemployed, and the probationers from courts of law.

The employer-employee status in industry has undergone a revolution -- a revolution that had its birth in eventual recognition of freedom of the individual. The worker's complete dependence on his employer, and the latter's decisions in business, has been greatly nullified by unionization, labor laws, mobility of living, and social security, even to the extent that the employer's decisions in business without the voice of the employee are questioned in many instances. The pendulum has swung past center, in fact, and the restrictions on management and "capital" have destroyed a large measure of business incentive and progress. As stated by Heron:

Among the broad gains or positive achievements, we find these: (1) The mass market of prosperous workers has become universally recognized as essential to the success of all business; this mass purchasing power has been multiplied over any previous standard. (2) The organized workers have gained great strength, largely with the help of artificial government protection amounting to hothouse care; they are now throwing off even that paternalistic sponsorship. (3) Organized workers have obtained, by demand, negotiation, government grant, and sometimes by violence, the right to participate in a wide variety of management decisions."<sup>1</sup> We all hope most fervently that the

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander R. Heron, Why Men Work, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1948), pp 167-169.





pessimistic outcomes he envisions as possible -- industrial anarchy, dictatorship, lower standard of living, and a declining national strength -- do not come about, but that management will lead a new industrial order in which all interested parties will share the power and the thinking in an orderly fashion, as he assumes. That will involve, indeed, the highest order of human relations!

A parallel revolution has come about in the status of enlisted men in the Navy, albeit in a more controlled manner due to the continuing power and necessity of discipline in a military organization. The same forces have been at work on the same kind of human beings who stemmed from the same environments as the industrial employee, but who elected to join, or were pushed or pulled into, the service. The level of education has risen steadily, fostered by a necessity for higher intelligence levels to operate the ships and equipment that have evolved from the technological age; and intensive, specialized training within the service has also resulted, which requires in turn a higher and higher level of basic education and capacity in the individual -- a cycle is in process. The Navy has expanded in step with the times and industry, management and command have become more and more complex and decentralized, and more foremen and supervisors (non-commissioned officers) are necessary. The enlisted man today is a thinking, reasoning, ambitious, young man, no longer a mere hand and body on the end of a line or swab.

Thus we see the Navy, as well as industry, as an evolving, not a static, organization, made up of people and growing, not just a vast machine composed of electronic and mechanical devices. We see the "needs" as mentioned before -- the need for well educated, highly technical executives who can appreciate the importance of non-logical behavior on the part of human beings; the need for understanding on the part of executives of the nature and workings of general social systems and of organic and evolving organizations; all in the field of human



relations. In fulfilling a part of these needs, the Navy has benefitted from the experiences and studies of industry, and more particularly from the impact of close war relations with men who entered the service directly from active industry and business -- experiences and examples both good and bad.

A further need is expressed by Dubin in his writing on human relations:

. . . we need more substantive knowledge about military organizations. Whether we like it or not, we have come to an age where of all the traditional types of organizations, collectively, we probably know least about the military. We know something about political, religious, business, fraternal, educational, and recreational organizations. . . . But up to World War II, military organizations were largely unknown and uninteresting to the vast majority of us. The probability is that the future will require us to improve our knowledge about military organizations and increase our interest in them. . . . In short, these studies of the Navy serve to give us a substantive knowledge of the armed forces as a type of organized human activity.<sup>1</sup>

The impartiality, completeness, and bias of his studies are open to question, but even that conclusion emphasized the need!

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<sup>1</sup>Dubin, op. cit., p 346.







## II. THE FACTORS

So what to do about the needs? I will not presume to outline a course of education that would put forth finished human relations experts and executives in either industry or the Navy. We can, however, look at a few facts and practices, well known to most of us who have worked with personnel, which will bear more thought.

Preliminary to ~~discussing~~ present-day employer-employee relations in industry and analogous relations within the Navy, I wish to make it clear now that I am not going to draw a strict parallel in the Navy by referring only to officer-enlisted men relations. The analogy does apply as between the two commonly-thought-of large groupings of personnel making up any armed service; but it also goes farther than that. It applies between non-commissioned officers, particularly between the Chief Petty Officers, and the enlisted men under their supervision; it applies between relatively senior and junior officers. There is also a difference in motivation and organization status between the employees in industry and the enlisted men in the Navy; the latter are bound more closely in normally voluntary obligated "service" to the country and the public, and the majority feel that and take pride in it, snide and careless remarks of cynics and scoffers to the contrary. The Navy can be classified more as a "profession" than as a "business", and all levels of individuals engaged in that profession are motivated and guided, in greater or less degree, by the code of that profession, written, unwritten, moral, or imposed. In any case, the enlisted man is more closely associated with the aims and purpose of his organization, in common with his superiors, than is the paid employee of a business organization. A few businesses, such as McCormick & Company, have more closely approached that relationship through employee participation in management. To better illustrate, Talcott Parsons observes that:



The commonest formula in terms of which the difference [between business and the profession] is popularly expressed as the distinction between "professionalism" and "commercialism." Now in the immediate sense the essence of professionalism consists in a series of limitations on the aggressive pursuit of self-interest. Thus, medical men are forbidden in the code of medical ethics, to advertise their services. . . . it does not follow that, in adhering to the code as well as they do, medical men are actually acting contrary to their self-interest in a sense in which business men do not. . . . In both cases the self-interest of the typical individual is on the whole harnessed to keeping the institutional code which is dominant in his own occupational sphere.<sup>1</sup>

In his first "hitch" in the service, the status of the enlisted man is most closely related to that of the normal industrial worker; as both officer and enlisted man continue in service and accept it as a chosen profession, they attain a common bond in the codes, the traditions, the discipline of their "occupational sphere." This study will treat with both phases.

In the field of employer-employee relations, Ralph E. Lee of the General Motors Corporation wrote a booklet which outlines a series of meetings for foremen and executives of General Motors; in those meetings were discussed the relationships that existed, and that should exist, between executives and foremen as a group and the employees who worked under them. I will quote rather freely from that booklet in succeeding paragraphs, for he states concisely what so many others have said in so many different ways.

In opening the meetings, he made the point that:

. . . the widely differing needs of this complicated "chop suey" of humanity [the individuals who make up the employees group] cannot be satisfied with any general set of rules or any general understanding or contract, no matter how apparently fair or representative these may be. Industrial employee cannot for long be led or driven as a herd of cattle, for this is contrary to human nature. Human beings are fundamentally and incurably individualists at heart.<sup>2</sup>

Do we find anything contrary to that belief in the Navy today? Gantt also mentioned in one of his works that "the age of driving men to work is past," and

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<sup>1</sup>Talcott Parsons, "The Motivation of Economic Activities" Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, May, 1940, quoted in Dubin, op. cit., p.36.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph E. Lee, Man to Man on the Job, booklet copyrighted by General Motors Corp.





stated that we must find a motivating force.

Lee next advocates separating the conditions which affect our work into two groups--one made up of conditions we can't do much about and the other made up of conditions we can do something about. The first includes government, law, unions, social changes, military strategy, post war, politics, international relations, class distinction; the Navy could include periodic change of station, regulations, separations, family hardships. The second grouping consists of personality, knowledge of your job, attitude, leadership, fairness, human understanding, self control, and salesmanship. We will examine these latter virtues, and lack of them, as we go along--yes, even salesmanship applies in the Navy, for every individual has occasion to sell himself, consciously or not. Also, the Navy can always stand good representation, as a whole--and we are not getting it, generally, from the ex-service men, in their informal conversations and writings.

Lee is quoted farther along in his initial meeting:

To my way of thinking, there are no tricks to getting along with people . . . . I still believe Emerson was right when he said, "What you are speaks so loudly I can't hear what you say." Since what we are and what we think are inseparable, then our attitude toward our employees as a group is far more important in getting along with them than all the people-persuading tricks we can learn in a lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

I would substitute "working with them" for "getting along with them." He continues:

I wouldn't be surprised if we discovered that most of our problems with employees today have come about as a result of employees thinking of their supervisors and management in terms of THEY, and of supervisors and management thinking of employees in terms of THEY.

How many times have read or been told that a division officer should know the name, family status, hobbies, and personal characteristics of every man in his division, and address him by name? All of us have seen, or experienced, examples of that ability, even to the extent of a commanding officer knowing the name of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 12.





every man in his ship (excluding such craft as carriers and battleships!); and we know the results accruing. That practice does not extend to familiar use of nicknames, embarrassing kidding, or back slapping, which the good enlisted man does not expect, like, or appreciate. It means knowing our men as individuals, which they do appreciate and which gives them a sense of belonging, of recognition --and a knowledge that poor work will be recognized as well as good. But learning names does not suffice. We must maintain contact, for every individual is subject to change, incident to the state of his mind, his family relations, his physical health, his financial status.

Texts and studies and scriptures on Leadership in the military services are legion. I could set down my own principles gained from experience (or by copying those writings) but I choose to quote Mr. Lee again, not only because he covers the field in such an expressive manner but because it is refreshing, and pertinent to this study, to view the almost complete agreement between industry and the service as to what constitutes a leader.

What a follower seeks in a leader, what an enlisted man looks for in his superior officer in most cases (commissioned or not):

1. He wants a leader who believes his work is important, and all those who are in it with him.
2. He wants to follow a leader who is not afraid . . . not afraid of his position, not afraid of his own boss, not afraid of a tough job, not afraid of the people who work for him, not afraid of honest mistakes--either theirs or his.
3. He wants a leader who gets a kick out of his work and helps his followers to get a kick out of theirs.
4. He wants a leader who gets a kick out of seeing a man do what that man thought he would never be able to do.
5. He wants a leader who will fight for him until hell freezes over, if the leader believes him to be in the right.
6. He wants a leader who will tell him what's what when he knows darn well it's coming to him, and a leader who will do it without losing his temper.
7. He wants a leader who recognizes him as a person, regardless of his experience, school or training, and regardless of his religion, race, station in life, or the lodge or union he belongs to.
8. He wants a leader who knows most of the answers but who will admit it if he doesn't know, and go get the answer.
9. He wants a leader who is predictable--that is, one he can depend upon to be the same all the time.
10. He wants a leader he can't put anything over on but who is human enough to look the other way when he occasionally makes an ass of himself.





11. He wants a leader who he knows understands him, to whom he is not afraid to go when he has been a fool, when he's ashamed, when he's about washed up, or when he's proud and happy.
12. He wants a leader who's as square as a die, who can't be bribed by anyone, and, being square himself, can see through crookedness in any form, regardless of how much or how little crookedness there is.
13. He wants a leader he can get to when he really needs him and can get away from when he's through with him.
14. He wants a leader who can show him how to do a job without showing off or showing him up.
15. He wants a leader who will give him a chance to try something hard he has never done.
16. He wants a leader who will listen to him when he has something to say but remembers an appointment when he drivels.
17. He wants a leader who he believes sincerely wants him to succeed and who will be proud of him when he does.
18. He wants a leader who seems to be trying to work himself out of his own job and his boys into it.
19. He wants a leader who respects his pride and never corrects him in the presence of others or gossips about him.
20. He wants a leader who knows all that's going on first-hand and turns a deaf ear to gossip.
21. He wants a leader who, if he can't be loyal to his company or supervisors, quits rather than work for them and talk about them at the same time.
22. He wants a leader with the authority to promote, demote or let him go, as he knows he deserves.

These are traits in common to outstanding leaders I have personally known:

1. Leaders seem to be so completely wrapped up in their jobs that they can't spare the time to worry about the jobs they might get or about other people who seem to be getting ahead faster than they.
2. Leaders find in their work not only a means of earning but also a reason for living.
3. Most leaders have hides as thick as a rhinoceros' as far as their own personal pride is concerned, but they are extremely sensitive to the pride of others--and always on guard against hurting others needlessly.
4. Most leaders instinctively listen more than they talk, and talk only when they have something worthwhile and appropriate to say. When they listen they automatically sift out of the words they hear, the nubbin of what the other fellow has on his mind. When they talk they use words the other fellow can understand--and no more words than necessary.
5. Having faith in the ability of their work to speak for itself, they are not afraid of their jobs or of anyone who threatens their jobs. Thus, they are always free from self-consciousness and are always themselves, whether with top executives or the men on the job.
6. Most leaders are not naturally inclined to invent, or become authors, or create new systems, or demonstrate their own personal talents or accomplishments publicly. Neither do they spend much time selling themselves.
7. They have confidence that their work will speak for itself. Without arrogance, and free from fear or awe of other people, they are in an unbiased





position to recognize and evaluate the ability of others, to encourage its development and to employ it to the best possible advantage of all concerned.

8. Free from fear for self, non-competitive toward others, and fair in their appraisal of others, leaders win the confidence and respect of those who willingly accept them as referees, judges and counselors.

9. All leaders control their temper to a marked degree--do not give way to uncontrolled enthusiasm or despair--but move from day to day, from week to week, on an even keel.

10. Leaders do not permit themselves to be bogged down with unimportant details. They are naturally inclined to brush aside detail, with an eye for the key-log in a jam. While they are patient with those who cannot see beyond detail, they will not permit these people to interfere with the removal of the key-log.

11. Leaders have a highly developed sense of feeling the lay of the land before they have facts to prove it. While respectful of facts and logic, they are able to read between the lines and anticipate the answer to a problem before it is available. They are logical, but they check their own logic--and that of others--with their hunch or feeling toward the matter. (Intuition is sometimes called horse sense--that quality which, if possessed by one of two people equally informed, makes the one a successful leader and the other questionable.)

12. Most leaders have the faculty of gaining confidence without becoming intimate with individuals. This avoids personal entanglements and the obligations they impose. Most leaders are, therefore, in a position to deal fairly, squarely and impartially with their men on the sole basis of their individual merits.

13. Most leaders are incapable of intense hatred, grudges or bitter quarrels, and are not conscious of enemies.

14. All leaders suggest rather than order. [Obvious limitations apply, both in industry and the military.]

#### Signs of Leadership

1. A low voice and, frequently, slow and thoughtful speech.
2. A neat appearance in moderate style.
3. Rarely in a hurry.
4. Easy gait and moderate pace.
5. Does not show all he feels and thinks.
6. Looks you squarely in the eye without staring.
7. Punctual.
8. Orderly.
9. Accurate.
10. Decent.
11. Laughs only when he means it, and then under control.
12. Rarely interrupts.
13. Rarely says "I."
14. Is not afraid to have others think he doesn't know when he doesn't.



15. Rarely tells everything he knows.
16. Makes sure you know the difference between his opinions and his facts.
17. Easy to meet and easy to leave.
18. Enjoys a contest of wits and a game of chance.
19. A good loser.
20. Bored with too much logic.
21. Is not usually a heavy reader.
22. Hard to sweep off his feet.
23. Quickly gets to the point.
24. Never takes himself too seriously.
25. Does not like to do things himself; likes to do what he does through others.
26. likes people.
27. Likes to lead.
28. Has assurance.
29. Not inclined to sit still for long.
30. Good memory.

. . . . .  
The leadership of most of us must be somewhere between the high and low limits of our specifications or we wouldn't be supervisors at all . The ability to take constructive criticism should be added to our already long list of specifications for leadership. If we can't take it, the chances are we will never be able to hand it out to others with any hope of making it stick.<sup>1</sup>

The man would be truly great who could live up to all the "specifications." To date he had not been born! The Navy has one further axiom to add: "You can't give orders until you have learned to take them." That learning is a major purpose of the U.S Naval Academy, the Naval Reserve Officer Training Courses, and and officer indoctrination course; the non-commissioned officers (petty officers) learn it in the hard school of experience by starting at the bottom.

At no point in the line of employer-employee relations is a single group of individuals placed in more direct contact with the employee, while still having responsibility to management, than the foremen. This position is most closely related to the Chief Petty Officer in the Navy. He must look both ways at once in his responsibilities--upward to his boss, and downward to his subordinates and the workers. In both industry and the Navy he is still an employee, or enlisted man, but in training for advancement to executive, or commissioned officer, status. He is blessed with the task of carrying out at the work level the rules, policies, and standards originated by his superiors, and to obtain enthusiastic cooperation, at least coordination, in effecting a smooth and completed task.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 74.





Unfortunately, human nature being what it is, the system and, too often, the arbitrary issuance of orders or new methods of management without thought to the ways and practicability of accomplishment, tends to constrain the foreman to concentrating more of his attention and effort upward to please the immediate superior, thus securing his own position, than downward toward the feelings and capacities of his subordinates. Thus originates the axiom "loyalty down as well as up." Certainly a Chief Petty Officer, and foreman, has need of all the attributes of a leader; but it is vital that all executives, when executing their superiors' orders or policies, think of the effects on their subordinates, the "how" and the practicability of carrying out the directive in the way they have expressed it; time or circumstances may not permit pondering in the Navy, and in such cases training, indoctrination, and discipline should prove their worth, both in giving and in the execution, with initiative, of orders. Following the same axiom, a superior must not hesitate to take responsibility for errors or inefficiency in a task for which he is responsible, no matter how many worthy subordinates he "told" to carry it out. The willingness to battle for a worthy cause in behalf of your men despite the displeasure or initial lack of enthusiasm of a superior; the fortitude to stand back of a commitment thoughtfully made to your subordinates, or explain why it is impossible to carry it out and why you were wrong in making it; all contribute to loyalty down.

Other factors that cannot be overlooked in our dealing with subordinates include their self respect, in their work and in their acceptance by others with whom they associate. Closely allied is "recognition," which, justifiably given, can be more of an influence to boost the morale and personal ego of an individual than any comforts or services or rewards; withheld, it can just as readily deflate and demoralize, destroying stature in the eyes of others.

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### III. JUNIOR-SENIOR RELATIONS

Let us deal now with the relations of a junior with his superior . We touched briefly on the manner in which a Chief Petty Officer or foreman could have his attention focused on the reactions of his superiors, to the detriment of his responsibility to the feelings and efforts of his workers. The junior officer or junior executive can as easily be overpowered and influenced by his superior's rank and use of authority to the point where he accepts every suggested idea of the senior, finally stops voicing or even having an independent thought, and rides along on the wishes and orders of that superior, developing into a perfect "yes" man. This may be flattering to some executives but is repugnant or downright maddening to most, who want to receive constructive criticism, refreshing and impersonal opposition, or honest opinions.

The solution for the junior lies in knowledge of his job, confidence in his own ability and opinions, ability to listen, and confidence in the ability of his superior and his exercise of authority.

It might be well at this point to look at what is meant by "authority" and what is involved in its use. Herbert A. Simon defines authority "as the power to make decisions which guide the actions of another."<sup>1</sup> His application refers to industry but it would appear to fit the military interpretation as well. He stresses the point that the subordinate role "establishes an area of acceptance in behavior within which the subordinate is willing to accept the decisions made for him by his superior." That acceptance, for the authority to be effective, must be based on confidence in the purpose and confidence that the command will be effective in achieving that purpose; it may be based on

. . . his faith in the ability of those who issue the command, his recognition that they have information he does not have, and his realization that his efforts and those of his fellow workers will be ineffective in reaching the desired objective without some coordination from above. With-

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior, quoted in Dubin, op. cit., p. 189.



in limits, he will even accept commands he knows to be incorrect because he does not wish to challenge or unsettle a system of authority that he believes to be beneficial to his aims in the long run.

Again, remember we are dealing primarily with administration. Simon continues:

A voluntary organization with poorly defined objectives has perhaps the narrowest range of acceptance. An army, where the sanctions as well as the customs are of extreme severity, has the broadest area of acceptance.<sup>1</sup>

He makes the point that military literature recognizes the importance of this "area of acceptance" as a fundamental element in tactics and refers to Colonel J.F.C. Fuller's description of the psychology of battle in his book The Foundations of the Science of War.

The use of authority in direct personal relations can certainly be abused, either in or out of the service. Authority in business must be based primarily on competence; in the service it is inherently based on rank, which in turn is generated from competence and experience, without which the unquestioning obedience to commands, in administration or in battle, would be lacking. In industry or the Navy, authority by virtue of rank may be abused by using it to hide ones own mistakes or uncertainties.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 193-194.

<sup>2</sup>See also Edmund P. Learned, David N. Ulrich, Donald R. Booz, Executive Action, (Andover, Mass.: Andover Press) copyrighted by the President and Fellows of Harvard College, 1951, p. 60.





#### IV. ASSOCIATION OF EQUALS

In a consideration of personal relationships we should deal briefly with a phase not often considered, that of association with equals or senior assistants.

Self confidence and self respect go hand in hand in determining the attitude of one executive toward his team mate, whether it be another vice president or another captain on a staff--or another junior officer in the wardroom, for that matter. And those attributes can be built only upon ability and honesty of purpose. The executive, whether he be a foreman, a Chief Petty Officer, or a department head, cannot secure the confidence and cooperation of those with whom he works on a horizontal plane of effort unless he contributes a full measure of energy, attention to duty, responsibility, and loyalty.

Again, ability to acknowledge one's own errors and correct them is a prime virtue, rather than the facility in finding a scapegoat.

Courtesy, tact, firmness in our own considered convictions, control of temper, are all familiar, but too frequently neglected, practices.

Perhaps the most difficult fact to realize--or admit--is that the majority of our contemporaries are just as smart as we are! They are thinking individuals who can bring to bear experience equal to or greater than ours and who are equally desirous of and as capable of arriving at a problem solution that may be different from ours but is fully as logical and acceptable. The ability to propose, propound, debate, discuss, compromise, and finally agree confirms the superiority of two heads.

If the superior can exercise the above qualities in working with a senior assistant or deputy, and use his "authority" only at the final stage of considered decision, he has really taken full advantage of assistance, a fuller confidence is felt in the decision, and each person has grown in stature in the opinion of the other.





## V. COMMUNICATIONS

There are a multitude of fields in which human relations is a factor. The last to be treated here is that of "communications."

A directive can be written painstakingly and routed efficiently and logically, but is the writer's real intent and meaning expressed? If so, does the reader really understand what the writer had in mind, what the situation is, what is desired in the way of implementation, cooperation, coordination? And if most of those considerations do get across, how well is it understood on down the line, as expressed by the receiver to his subordinates? I am not speaking here of the explicit order, or the command, not requiring interpretation. Herein the Navy has an advantage in its own cryptic "language" or use of standard terms known to all, to a greater extent than the usual business organization; often referred to disparagingly, the usage has a proven merit and necessity, again in the continuous training for that ultimate battle when speed, accuracy, and brevity of direct, physical communications are the essence.

Barnard calls communication the foundation of cooperative group activity. Roethlisberger writes "that a good portion of the executive's environment is verbal seems hardly open to question." In instructing, persuading, explaining, directing, delegating, the executive is constantly putting his ideas and thoughts into words that someone else, of the same or differing status and capacity, must "get." Roethlisberger goes on to say that the executive must

. . . be able to interpret skillfully what people say, for in so far as his work involves the interactions of human beings his data comes from what he hears as well as from what he sees and does. Whether he likes it or not, he has to practice this difficult art; yet he has no explicit tools for doing it. He either picks up the skill intuitively or tries to organize his work so that the need for exercising it is at a minimum. This latter method is likely to be unsuccessful because it leads him to busy himself more and more with logical, statistical, and oversimplified abstractions or lofty principles about human motivations and conduct. In doing so he loses touch with the concrete situation before him.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fritz J. Roethlisberger, "The Executive's Environment is Verbal", Management and Morale, reprinted in Dubin, op. cit., p. 306.





Have you known any naval officers who fit that description?

Another writer has some concrete suggestions for a program of improving verbal communications. First, establish a "climate of Communications," accomplished by group meetings where "top management" talks to all levels of employees, and by regular conferences held at all levels with people who are directly supervised. Second, set up a training program in three principle areas: (1) the ability to speak clearly and distinctly to one or more people, or in a group; (2) the ability to plan and lead a meeting or conference; (3) the combination of things required to talk informally to another person in an interview or conversation in the day-to-day contacts.<sup>1</sup>

The booklet "Conference Sense," published in the Navy, has a lot to offer.

Communications "up" is probably as important as communication "down." If the executive is isolated in his ivory tower (or cabin), inaccessible and unapproachable except "through channels," he will lose the touch and the feeling of his organization and how it is functioning. As expressed by one writer

Only by taking time from immediate concerns can the executive develop an understanding of the basic human forces at work in his organization. And his greatest gains may come from the example he sets for his own subordinates to follow in their relationships with others in the company.<sup>2</sup>

He makes the point that face-to-face contacts require a definite skill, and that therein the executive needs full recognition of the importance which subordinates attach to his prestige, after which he can overcome his disadvantage by exercise of patience and discretion.

The principle<sup>al</sup> bar to effective communication "up" is the executive's official position. As the above author points out, in the same book:

If a top executive has not made it a practice to walk through his plant,

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<sup>1</sup>Harold P. Zelko, "Taking the Mystery Out of Communications", The Journal of Industrial Training, July-August, 1951, reprinted in The Management Review, October, 1951, pp. 617-618.

<sup>2</sup>Learned, Ulrich, & Booz, op. cit., p. 114.





his occasional trips are likely to convince him that he is right in not often leaving his own world. His mere presence may be so upsetting that work suffers. "There must be something wrong, or the boss wouldn't come here."

This has an application in the Navy to informal, unannounced "trips through the plant," not the periodic, scheduled, formal inspections.

An executive should maintain contact with ranks and levels several rungs down the ladder, but not use information gained to embarrass an immediate subordinate. He should be a good listener to juniors, but not commit himself to action when listening to a gripe session or a salesmanship demonstration; consider it and then "go through channels." He should be available and yet be able to conclude a conversation easily without pain; a subordinate feels that he and his job are recognized, that he is more than a cog, and is encouraged by example to broaden his relationships with his own subordinates, if he can have occasional "communication" with a boss not his own immediate superior.





## VI. CONCLUSION

If we could all live up to even an approximation of the naval officer that John Paul Jones described we would have little difficulty with our human relations problems. Robert A. Milliken said: "The filling station men have improved the manners and courtesy of the American public more than all the colleges in the country." And in an article titled "The Mainspring of Human Relations," the author wrote:

His [a person's] courtesy makes things pleasanter and easier for everybody, for there is no double standard to his thoughtfulness. With the late George Bernard Shaw, he believes that the great secret is not to have bad manners or good manners, but having the same manners for all human souls. The sincerity of his manners keeps them refreshingly free from apish bowing and scraping, and also free from any patronizing air of condescension.<sup>1</sup>

The Navy has been termed "one of the the largest corporations in the world." Despite the inherent differences between the organizations of industries and the Navy, and their methods of doing business, the people involved remain human beings essentially, in or out of uniform. All are primarily motivated by a self-interest best expressed as an ultimate goal, that of "success."

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<sup>1</sup>Author unknown, "The Mainspring of Good Human Relations," The Management Review, Sept, 1951, p. 523.

